

IDAHO AT A GLANCE

Facts and figures about living and working in Idaho

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IDAHO
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AUTO REGISTRATION AND TITLE AND DRIVERS' LICENSING

Automobile licensing, title transfer, and registration are decentralized in Idaho. The rates vary by jurisdiction, but are modest compared to those of most states.

Service	Agency
Registration and Title Transfer	County Assessor
Drivers' Licenses	County Sheriff

RECREATION

Idaho is a haven for recreation enthusiasts. Northern Idaho has the greatest concentration of lakes in the West and evergreen forests abound. The Salmon River bisects the rugged Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness and provides some of the best whitewater kayaking and rafting in the world. The Sawtooth Wilderness Area and the White Cloud peaks provide additional recreational opportunities. World-famous Sun Valley is located between these mountain ranges.

Hells Canyon, the deepest river gorge in North America, lies on the state's western border, overlooked by the Seven Devils Mountains. In Idaho's southwestern corner are the tallest sand dunes on the continent. In the south central region is the Craters of the Moon National Monument, where America's astronauts trained for moonwalks. Idaho has 16 alpine ski areas, over 200 miles of groomed nordic trails, over 7,200 miles of groomed snowmobile trails, 464,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs, 26,000 miles of fishing streams, 2,433 miles of floatable rivers, 25 state parks and 15 national forests.

Contact: Idaho Tourism Development Division, 700 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0093, (800) 714-3246. Web: visitidaho.org or Idaho Department of Fish and Game, P.O. Box 25, Boise, Idaho 83707, 800-ASK-FISH. Web: fishandgame.idaho.gov

HISTORY

Idaho's history is rich in texture, from the early preeminence of American Indians to the pioneer fur trappers, miners, loggers, railroad builders, and farmers who later settled the territory. Traces of Idaho history can still be viewed today in many parts of the state.

Contact: Idaho State Historical Society, 210 Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83702, (208) 334-2682. Web: idahohistory.net

IDaho At A Glance

We are pleased to have the opportunity to answer your questions about what it is like to live and work in this beautiful part of America. We hope you find the following information useful.

EMPLOYMENT

Idaho has a strong and diversified economy. While the traditional resource-based industries of agriculture, forest products, and mining continue to contribute to the economy, high-tech, tourism, retail trade, healthcare, and business and information services are growth sectors. As in any economy, employment growth in Idaho is not uniform. In the past few years, some counties experienced strong growth, some remained unchanged, and some declined. After slow employment growth in 2002 and 2003, economic activity in 2004 added over 15,000 jobs statewide. In 2005 and 2006, the state's economy is expected to grow more slowly, adding jobs at a rate of about 1.7 percent per year; a rate that is expected to exceed the national average.

For employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors, contact Idaho Commerce & Labor at 317 W. Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735 or any of the 24 local offices throughout the state. Addresses and phone numbers of these offices are in the directory on the Commerce & Labor home page cl.idaho.gov. Idaho's larger communities also are served by excellent private firms that match job seekers with employment opportunities in the private sector.

AVERAGE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE

	2004
Civilian Labor Force	703,067
Unemployment	33,339
Percent Unemployment	4.7%
Total Employment	669,728

NONFARM PAYROLL JOBS

Annual Average	2004
Total	587,081
Construction	39,670
Manufacturing	61,444
Retail & Wholesale Trade	98,834
Transportation & Warehousing	17,058
Financial Activities	27,867
Professional & Business Service	73,228
Educational & Health Services	65,115
Leisure & Hospitality Services	55,566
Government	114,299

AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY – 2004

Construction	\$14.95
Manufacturing.....	19.95
Retail Trade	10.72
Wholesale Trade	17.76
Transportation & Warehousing	13.00
Financial Activities	17.56
Professional & Business Services.....	15.64
Educational & Health Services.....	13.65
Leisure & Hospitality Services	5.48
Information	17.51

MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE BY OCCUPATION – 2005

Financial managers.....	\$26.23
General & operations managers.....	24.58
Computer programmers.....	25.07
Computer systems analysts	29.53
Electronics engineers	35.90
Accountants & auditors	20.50
Retail salespersons.....	8.96
Office clerks, general	10.74
Cashiers.....	7.84
Exec. secretaries & admin. assistants	13.76
Receptionists & information clerks.....	10.02
Electrical & electronic equip. assemblers.....	11.58
Assemblers & fabricators	8.56
Electricians	21.30
Helpers, construction trades.....	10.43
Carpenters	14.05
Welders, cutters, solderers, & brazers	13.88
Truck drivers, heavy & tractor-trailer.....	14.52
Logging equipment operators	18.19
Crushing, grinding, & polishing machine setters, operators, & tenders	13.09
Janitors & cleaners	8.73
Registered nurses	22.66
Child, family, & school social workers	13.80
Medical & clinical lab technicians	13.90
Nursing aides, orderlies, & attendants.....	8.83
Cooks, restaurant.....	8.36

POPULATION

STATE OF IDAHO (2004).....	1,393,262
Largest Cities 7/1/03 % Change 00-03	
Boise City.....190,117	2.3%
Nampa.....64,269	23.9%
Idaho Falls.....51,507	1.5%
Pocatello.....51,009	-0.9%
Meridian.....41,127	17.8%
Coeur d'Alene.....37,262	8.0%
Twin Falls.....36,742	6.6%
Caldwell.....31,041	19.5%
Lewiston.....30,937	0.9%
Rexburg.....21,862	26.7%
Moscow.....21,707	2.0%
Post Falls.....19,984	15.9%
Eagle.....15,253.....	37.6%
Mountain Home.....11,376.....	2.1%
Garden City.....11,083.....	4.3%
Blackfoot.....10,646.....	2.2%
Hayden.....10,421	13.8%
Chubbuck.....10,151	4.6%
Burley.....9,313	0.0%
Kuna.....8,839	64.2%
Ammon.....8,623	39.4%

COST OF LIVING

Based on average housing costs, utilities, health care, transportation, groceries, and other services, Idaho's cost of living is the second lowest of the eleven western states. Boise's cost of living is 96 percent of the national average, Idaho Falls' is 92 percent, Pocatello's is 92 percent, and Twin Falls' is 93 percent. The chart at the right provides a comparison of the relative cost of living in the western states averaged over four consecutive quarters based on the participating cities within those states.

Source: ACCRA Cost of Living Index 1st quarter 2004 through 4th quarter, 2004

INDEX

UT	92.6
ID	94.7
MT	99.1
NAT'L	100.0
NM	101.4
WY	101.5
CO	102.2
AZ	102.6
WA	103.8
NV	107.9
OR	108.0
CA	144.9

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The yellow pages of telephone books provide an excellent profile of economic activity and employment possibilities for most communities. New residents also will find the local newspapers useful. Below are the addresses of Idaho's largest daily newspapers.

Boise The Idaho Statesman
P.O. Box 40
Boise, Idaho 83707
(208) 377-6200 Web: idahostatesman.com

Coeur d'Alene The Coeur d'Alene Press
201 N. Second Street
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814
(208) 664-8176 Web: cdapress.com

Idaho Falls The Post Register
P.O. Box 1800
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83403
(208) 522-1800 Web: idahonews.com

Lewiston The Lewiston Morning Tribune
P.O. Box 957
Lewiston, Idaho 83501
(208) 743-9411 Web: lmtribune.com

Moscow The Moscow-Pullman Daily News
P.O. Box 8187
Moscow, Idaho 83843
(208) 882-5561 Web: dnews.com

Nampa The Idaho Press-Tribune
P.O. Box 9399
Nampa, Idaho 83652
(208) 467-9251 Web: idahopress.com

Pocatello The Idaho State Journal
P.O. Box 431
Pocatello, Idaho 83204
(208) 232-4161 Web: journalnet.com

Twin Falls The Times-News
P.O. Box 548
Twin Falls, Idaho 83303
(208) 733-0931 Web: magicvalley.com

Idaho's history, government, economy, education system, and recreational opportunities are described in the **Idaho Blue Book**. It can be purchased for \$10.00 payable to the Secretary of State, Room 203, Statehouse, Boise, Idaho 83720-0080.

CLIMATE

Idaho's climate is diverse. It is influenced by Pacific weather patterns, which help moderate temperature extremes. Generally, the northern part of the state has greater precipitation than either southwestern or southeastern Idaho. The southern part of the state has warmer summer temperatures than the north and is drier throughout the year. Southeastern Idaho, however, tends to be cooler than the west and drier than the north. Idaho's growing season varies from about 200 days near the city of Lewiston to very brief at high altitudes. Idaho has no hurricanes. Tornadoes and hailstorms are extremely rare. Winds may accompany cold fronts and thunderstorms.

Geographically representative climate examples are:

	<u>Elevation</u>	<u>Annual Mean Precipitation</u>	<u>Mean Snowfall</u>	<u>July Avg High Temp</u>	<u>Jan Avg Low Temp</u>	<u>July Avg Afternoon Humidity</u>
Boise	2,840	12.1 in.	21.3 in.	90.2	21.6	22%
Coeur d'Alene	2,158	25.9 in.	52.2 in.	85.4	23.3	34%
Idaho Falls	4,730	10.9 in.	37.5 in.	86.0	10.0	25%
Lewiston	1,440	12.4 in.	19.8 in.	89.0	27.6	34%
Pocatello	4,450	12.1 in.	47.2 in.	88.1	14.4	38%
Twin Falls	3,670	10.4 in.	31.3 in.	85.0	18.6	27%

HOSPITALS

Idaho has 48 licensed hospitals. All but two Idaho communities with a population of more than 2,500 are within 13 miles of a hospital. The other two communities are within 16 miles of a hospital.

CRIME RATE

Idaho's crime rate is the lowest in the West. In fact, according to FBI statistics, the rate of serious crime here is 21.3 percent less than the national average.

WATER QUALITY

Much of Idaho's surface water flows out of the high mountains and is generally of high quality. People swim and fish in the center of Boise, the state's largest city, and water-based sports are enjoyed throughout the state. In addition, high-quality ground water is pumped extensively for agricultural, industrial, and residential use from the Snake River Plain aquifer across southern Idaho and from the Rathdrum Prairie aquifer in the northern panhandle.

Contact: Department of Environmental Quality, 1410 N. Hilton, Boise, Idaho 83706-1255, (208) 373-0502. Web: deq.state.id.us

AIR QUALITY

Overall Idaho's air quality is good throughout the year. A few locations experience winter temperature inversions, and in some localities pollen affects people who have allergies.

Contact: Department of Environmental Quality, 1410 N. Hilton, Boise, Idaho 83706-1255, (208) 373-0502.
Web: deq.state.id.us

COMMUTING TIME

The average commuting time from home to work in Idaho is 20 minutes.

CULTURE

Idaho's cultural activities are as diverse as the state's geography. World-famous resorts host first-class musical performers, theatre, winter carnivals, and art shows. Idaho is home to a symphony orchestra, opera and ballet companies, chamber music groups, and a summer Shakespeare festival. But culture comes in many forms throughout the state: jazz and bluegrass music, big-name stars, nationally recognized music festivals, community theatre, rodeos, county fairs, and professional sports.

Contact: Idaho Tourism Development Division, 700 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0093, (800) 714-3246. Web: visitidaho.org

HOUSING

Idaho's housing costs are moderate and affordable, and homes are available from modest cottages to executive estates. The following table portrays the average house value in geographically representative Idaho communities:

2004 AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING COST

Community (County)	Median Value	Mean Value
Boise (Ada)	\$163,000	\$193,863
Burley/Rupert (Mini/Cassia)	71,450	83,325
Coeur d'Alene (Kootenai)	134,000	174,014
Idaho Falls (Bonneville)	118,700	136,038
Ketchum/Sun Valley (Blaine)	N/A	685,117
Lewiston/Clarkston (Nez Perce)	111,300	116,118
Nampa/Caldwell (Canyon)	108,000	120,032
Pocatello (Bannock)	98,900	114,774
Sandpoint (Bonner)	165,000	216,766
Twin Falls (Twin Falls)	110,129	124,425

Source: Idaho Association of Realtors

Property values vary tremendously from community to community and even within a community. Contact a real estate broker in your locality who is a member of a national relocation network. As a free service, the broker can put you in touch with real estate professionals in specific Idaho communities.

RESIDENTIAL ENERGY COSTS

Idaho provides a substantial energy cost advantage over much of the nation. Natural gas rates are competitive and residential electric rates are among the lowest in the country. Rates vary regionally as the following data demonstrate:

SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

<u>Natural Gas</u>	<u>Electricity</u>
\$67.08/mo	\$61.32/mo
(75 Therms/mo)	(1,000 KWH/mo)

NORTHERN IDAHO

<u>Natural Gas</u>	<u>Electricity</u>
\$74.75/mo	\$62.89/mo
(75 Therms/mo)	(1,000 KWH/mo)

SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

<u>Natural Gas</u>	<u>Electricity*</u>
\$67.08/mo	\$46.68/mo
(75 Therms/mo)	(1,000 KWH/mo)

*Weighted avg. of summer & winter rates. However, the electric rates for the majority of the population of southeastern Idaho are the same as for southwestern Idaho.

Estimates for natural gas reflect rates effective for year 2004.
Estimates for electricity reflect annual average rates for 2004 as reported by the three major utility companies.

TAXES

The combined total of state and local taxes on income, property, sales, and autos for a family of four with \$25,000 annual income in Boise, Idaho, is lower than the comparable tax in the largest city of 44 other states. For a family with an income level of \$50,000, Boise's total tax is lower than that in the largest city of 30 other states. For a family with an income level of \$75,000, it is lower than that in the largest city of 20 other states. For a family with an income level of \$100,000, Boise's total tax is lower than that in the largest city of 19 other states.

Source: Washington, D.C., Office of Research and Analysis, 2003

In fiscal year 2002, 36 of the 50 states had higher overall taxes per \$1,000 of total personal income than Idaho, and all but 7 states had higher overall taxes per capita.

Source: Idaho State Tax Commission

PROPERTY TAXES

Below are average property tax rates within the following communities:

Boise	1.725%
Coeur d'Alene	1.750%
Idaho Falls	2.259%
Lewiston	2.192%
Nampa	2.193%
Pocatello	2.404%
Twin Falls	1.741%

Because of the homeowner's exemption, these rates are applied to only half of the value of the first \$100,000 of improvements on owner-occupied homesites but are applied to 100 percent of the land value. They represent typical rates in the largest city in selected counties.

Source: Idaho State Tax Commission: Typical Rates of Cities, 2004

INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX

Idaho's income tax base closely parallels the definition used by the federal government. In general, the same income is taxed and the same deductions are allowed. The Idaho tax rates range from 1.6 percent to 7.8 percent of taxable income. The maximum rate begins at \$22,577 for single filers and \$45,154 for married couples and heads of households. Idaho income tax brackets are indexed for inflation each year.

Contact: Idaho State Tax Commission, P.O. Box 36, Boise, Idaho 83722, 1-800-972-7660. Web: tax.idaho.gov

EDUCATION

Idaho ranks in the top third among the 50 states for percentage of adults aged 25 and older who have graduated from high school (84.7 percent). Nearly 64 percent of the state's total general fund is allocated to education. Idaho's students score well above the national average on the SAT. Almost 94 percent of Idaho's school-age children attend public schools, demonstrating a high level of public confidence and encouraging a demographically balanced student population.

Almost every city with a population over 20,000 has a college or university. Off-campus programs are available at convenient locations throughout the state. Idaho's universities and colleges bring training, research, and technical assistance programs within reach of every person via computer, telecommunications, and video technology. University Place in Idaho Falls provides programs through the University of Idaho and Idaho State University.

There are six professional-technical training centers in Idaho. These centers also provide training at business facilities off-campus. In addition to Eastern Idaho Technical College in Idaho Falls, professional-technical programs are offered through Boise State University, Idaho State University, College of Southern Idaho, North Idaho College, and Lewis-Clark State College.

Contacts:

Primary and secondary school information:

Superintendent of Public Instruction, Room 200,
Len B. Jordan Building, 650 W. State Street,
P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0027,
(208) 332-6800. Web: sde.state.id.us/dept/

Colleges and universities: Office of the State Board of Education, Room 307, Len B. Jordan Building, 650 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0037, (208) 334-2270. Web: idahoboardofed.org

University and college catalogs may be obtained by writing to each institution.

Professional-technical education programs and certificates: Idaho Division of Professional-Technical Education, Room 324, Len B. Jordan Building, 650 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0095, (208) 334-3216. Web: pte.state.id.us

Recent full-time equivalent (FTE) college academic enrollment data is shown below:

Public Universities	2004 FTE Enrollment
Boise State University	12,607
Boise, ID	
University of Idaho	11,040
Moscow, ID	
Idaho State University	9,191
Pocatello, ID	
Public Four-Year College	2004 FTE Enrollment
Lewis-Clark State College	2,127
Lewiston, ID	
Public Community Colleges	2004 FTE Enrollment
North Idaho College	2,712
Coeur d'Alene, ID	
College of Southern Idaho	3,233
Twin Falls, ID	
Private Universities	2004 FTE Enrollment
Northwest Nazarene University	1,438
Nampa, ID	
BYU-Idaho	10,767
Rexburg, ID	
Private Four-Year Colleges	2004 FTE Enrollment
Albertson College of Idaho	782
Caldwell, ID	
Boise Bible College	106
Boise, ID	



For the addresses of community chambers of commerce or for demographic and economic information pertaining to specific counties and communities, please contact:

Idaho Commerce & Labor
700 W. State Street
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0093
(208) 334-2470
05 33120-15M
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Upon request, information in this pamphlet will be provided in alternative formats for individuals with disabilities.

Idaho Commerce & Labor is an equal opportunity employer.